

New York Tribune.

First to Last—The Truth—News—Editorials—Advertisements.

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The House Goes to the Rescue of the President's Prestige.

The passage by the House of Representatives of a revised ship purchase bill (the tenth or eleventh edition of this great "emergency" measure) will hardly help the President and Mr. McAdoo in their efforts to create public confidence in the administration's plans for a government owned and operated merchant marine. The action of the House was not spontaneous. The big Democratic majority in that body would gladly have dodged the unpleasant duty of going on record on this scheme. There was some serious talk in August and September last of legislation to relieve the shipping situation. Then there was some real apprehension that American exports—particularly cotton exports—would be tied up here for lack of ships. But what looked like an emergency passed, and the House quickly lost interest in plans to put the government into business as an ocean carrier.

It would never have voted yesterday on the Weeks-Gore bill except for the unusual pressure put upon the majority by the President. There is a new "emergency" to be dealt with now. It is not economic and has nothing to do with the needs of American shippers. It is exclusively political and personal and concerns the President's prestige as a party leader. He has staked his authority on the passage by Congress of some sort of ship purchase law and is appealing to his followers in Congress to save him from the humiliation of having to acknowledge that he had conjured up an imaginary economic emergency and had offered the country a remedy in which it refuses to interest itself.

Speaker Clark put the case bluntly in the Democratic caucus when he said that regardless of the intrinsic merits of the House bill it was necessary to follow the leader in the White House. That is the subservient spirit in which the Senate bill, now sidetracked, was pushed. The President's pride of opinion has been touched and he is battling desperately not to give the country a law based on his original conviction of what was needed, but to rush through any sort of hodge-podge which will, politically speaking, "save his face."

The House form of the bill is just as obnoxious as was the Senate form or any other of the earlier variations. It is proposed now to give the Ship Purchase Board a life of two years. But if the board should purchase interned ships (and they are about the only available purchases in sight) it may be two years before the right to operate such ships is adjudicated in the British prize courts or before boards of arbitration. Then the ships acquired are to be turned over to the Secretary of the Navy, who, with the approval of the President, is to decide whether they are to be retained in use as freighters or converted into naval auxiliaries.

So far as the navy's needs are concerned it would be much better to let the Secretary buy auxiliaries at first hand. So far as giving aid to American shippers is involved, buying a lawsuit in the British prize courts would only be a joke at their expense. The creation of a government owned merchant marine would be a serious blow to our present shipping interests and would deter private capital from going into shipping ventures, in spite of the temporary inducement of very high freight rates.

Who would benefit by the passage of a ship purchase bill? So far as we can see, only those who want to sell their ships because war conditions have made it impossible to operate them. The great government ownership scheme really tapers down to a mere purchase scheme, and the House bill is just as vicious as any of its predecessors because it retains the purchase clause. The President has fallen far when he can allow his prestige as a party leader to be tied up with what looks like a mere project for the relief of a small class of foreign ship owners and their selling agents in the United States.

A Triumph for Typhoid Vaccine.

The value of typhoid fever anti-toxin is having a splendid demonstration among the British troops in the trenches. Since the war began, according to Sir Frederick Treves, there have been only 212 cases of typhoid fever among the soldiers of the expeditionary force, and of that number 173 had not been inoculated at all and eighteen more had not been fully inoculated. Only eleven had had the complete treatment. Not one inoculated man in the whole force died from the disease.

This is in accord with the experience of the American regulars camped for a longer period and throughout a hot summer on the Mexican border. Every soldier there had been inoculated, and an almost complete absence of the disease resulted. But the conditions during actual warfare in the trenches in France and Flanders are much more favorable to the development of typhoid than even those of a summer camp on the Rio Grande. The continued rains, the exigencies of battle, the exposure and lack of sleep and food and the tremendous numbers of men involved would seem to provide an ideally fertile field for a vast typhoid epidemic much more costly to the Allies than bullets.

Undoubtedly, the strict sanitary measures employed by the medical corps of the British force

have had a great deal to do in preventing such an epidemic. But in such circumstances all the sanitation possible would not prevent a serious loss from typhoid. Its almost complete elimination from the dangers of a military campaign must be ascribed to vaccination.

The Open Markets Become Permanent.

While the open markets will not be free in future, Borough President Marks declares that they will be permanent. The charging of a small rental for space in them, as the Sinking Fund Commission has decided to do, will serve two purposes. It will assure the city some income as an offset to the expense of maintaining them and it will lessen the protests of retail dealers in their neighborhood that the city, by subsidizing the stallholders in the markets, is discriminating against the storekeepers.

How the charging of this rent will affect prices to consumers is yet to be determined, but it ought not to bring about any material increase. These temporary markets, now made permanent, undoubtedly have had a beneficial effect in lowering the cost of living for those who could patronize them. Protests against permitting this at the city's expense were legitimate to the extent that the city gave the stalls rent free. Now that this has been changed, the markets will have a chance to demonstrate their ability to serve the public on a fairer basis of competition with the permanent merchants. If they can do this and still preserve their lower prices they will be a valuable factor indeed in the city's scheme of food distribution.

The Value of the Mayor's Bread Letter.

The letter of Mayor Mitchell to President Wilson on the bread question, which was considered at the Cabinet meeting in Washington yesterday, will serve two good purposes. It will tend to hasten a comprehensive investigation of the food-stuffs situation in this country, and it may also discourage an artificial advance in the price of wheat.

It is a national problem which we are facing, and while local investigations may prove valuable in unearthing local conspiracies among bakers, the inadequacy of city or state inquiries to go to the bottom of the matter is only too apparent. Here in New York, for example, the authorities cannot compel the testimony of the big Chicago operators, against whom the burden of complaint rests. On the other hand, the preparations of the Attorney General to look thoroughly into the situation so far as this state is concerned have undoubtedly had something to do with the recent break in wheat quotations.

Let us have, then, a thoroughgoing federal investigation of the whole problem, touching on every factor involved, from the wheat field to the dinner table. By all means let us have it before any such rash thing as an embargo is attempted, with the consequent crippling of our foreign commerce and a great increase of unemployment. In the meantime, however, it will be well if the rabid wheat speculators remember that to the possibility of an opening of the Dardanelles and the release of Russian grain stores there is added that of a limitation on American export of wheat, provided they become unreasonably energetic on the bull side.

No Zigzag Street Crossings.

There is merit in the recommendation of the Mayor's Committee on Street Traffic and Safety that it be made illegal to cross streets except at corners and at crossings designated in the middle of long blocks. This is no sedate country community, where the villagers may cut zigzag across streets without danger to themselves and without detriment to the flow of traffic. Not all the street accidents which occur here are due to carelessness or recklessness of speeding chauffeurs or truckdrivers. Some are chargeable entirely to the pedestrians injured.

Most European cities have the system which the police authorities and the Mayor's committee propose for New York. The stream of pedestrians at crowded street crossings moves according to rules just as the stream of vehicular traffic does. The pedestrian has no rights in a street save at corner crossings, and if he wanders out of his territory and gets hurt it is his own fault. The general result is a limitation of the danger zone. The traffic policemen may handle their task with all attention on the crossings. It may be hard to break the habit which many people have of darting across streets wherever they see a chance, but it will be worth while to try it because of greater safety and ease in handling traffic.

Making the Governor the Real Leader.

Professor Jenks's plea for a constitutional reorganization of the state government along business lines inevitably takes in the short ballot policy. He would have the Governor and Lieutenant Governor elected, with power given to the Governor to appoint his cabinet of department heads. But he goes further than that in centralizing power and authority in the Governor, for he would confer on that official power to introduce bills and the right to address the Legislature personally in support of his policies. The reconstruction scheme thus outlined is one which Mr. Stimson has advocated for months, and is known to be supported by many of the Republican delegates to the Constitutional Convention. It makes the Governor the real leader in policy and action; in fact, it makes him pretty much the whole administration. That is exactly what the voters want him to be, if there is any accurate way of gauging public sentiment or interpreting the drift of politics in recent years.

The head of the ticket is the candidate whose views are sought and whose utterances are listened to during a campaign. When elected he is the man who by his inaugural address and his message to the Legislature sets the pace for the administration. When his term ends, his administration is judged by the nearness with which the programme he laid out and the party's accomplishments tally. Yet at present he has not the power to carry out his programme or even full responsibility for it. Elected state officials, his colleagues on the ticket over whom he has no control, may block his programme in many important respects. The Legislature may fail utterly to agree with him and bring about a deadlock in a wholly unreasonable fashion.

From the viewpoint of practical efficiency the system of three co-ordinate branches of government has partially broken down. A combination of executive and semi-legislative powers in the Executive ought to get around many of the difficulties of the present way of working. The proposal is one of the most important the Constitutional Convention will deal with, and, from the public's point of view, one of the most interesting.

The Conning Tower

The Unicorn Consumer Loses.

Some sold them white bread,
Some sold them brown;
But up went the price of it
All around the town.

It was a tremendous mistake for us to skip that course in Pol. Econ. If we had taken it, we might understand why bakers have not as much right to charge 6 cents for a loaf of bread as newspapers have to charge 3 cents a copy.

It appears that during the Grand Tour our readers are to have no vacation. Fearful lest our artistic arteries harden from disuse, The Boss wants us to write pieces about the places we visit, their inhabitants, their imports and exports and other fascinating bits of information. Would we do it? Like a flash we answered yes. So it won't be a vacation for any of us. . . . We shan't get even a 3-cent loaf out of it.

People complain about 6-cent bread, but they are pretty prodigal, most of them. Think of the ink wasted by those who address letters "Personal."

NIGHT LIFE IN A GREAT CITY.
(From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.)
GENTLEMAN: Quiet room; breakfast 4 p. m.; privilege of a bath; full particulars, address D 230, Ledger Office.

"Does anybody excepting us read Charles Stuart Calverley?" asks old Bert Taylor. Well, we do, for one; and so, for a few more, do the people we send Calverley's books to—perhaps a dozen a year. But the book-store clerks don't read him. Generally when we ask for Calverley's Poems the clerk thinks we want the Cavalier Poets.

THANKS FOR THE AD, STEWART.

(Stewart Edward White in the February Atlantic.)
And beneath all is a great wary alertness, that sits like a captain in a CONNING TOWER, spying cannily over all the situation as it develops, poised ready to plan competently for the unexpected.

"Most women do not want the vote," say the Antis. "Most women did not want the steamboat," we counter, triumphantly. If the Antis want a good argument, why don't they point to the fact that the steamboat was invented before Kansas had suffrage? Then we mightn't have a comeback ready.

"Why not glue factories on Riverside Drive?" headlines the American. If one simply had to choke a chortle out of that, one might mention the various apartment building owners that stick the tenants.

THE DYING HADRIAN TO HIS SOUL.

Animula, vagula, blandula.

Tiny, wandering, holy flame,
Guest and host of mortal frame,
Naked, colorless and stark,
Whither wilt thou now embark?
And—as ever is thy bent—
Wilt thou make thee merrierment?

O. M. DENNIS.

The prospect of great riches lures us not at all, yet we don't see how we can dodge enormous wealth. We are going into the pin-manufacturing business, if we can be assured of furnishing only the unnecessary pins that are used in new, ready-made shirts.

Translation's Artless Aid.

(From "The only correct and authorized edition" of the libretto of "Fidelio." Price 25 cents.)

Who scarcely lives the semblance of a shadow?
Yes, to him, to him down. I at short distance wait. And in the cistern a grave prepare, quick, for him.

I'll speak to him for your best!
We are watched by eyes and ears.
Down to that man whom for weeks past I have continually diminished the food.

Sweet solace feels this heart my duty I fulfilled!
Oh heavens assist if it is him!
Who? I and you?

To you alone it becomes completely to set him free!

"What nasty weather they have in New York!" said George Anderson to Mabel Trautman. And she had him arrested for flirting; and he got thirty days. It must be admitted, however, that George was an excellent describer.

Miss Trautman shouldn't have had him arrested, we believe. She should have said "The weather seems to be contagious," or "How long the days are growing!" But perhaps, like the rest of us, she didn't think of that until she got home.

THE POLICEMEN OF NEW YORK CITY.

I have seen the policemen of many cities, including Philadelphia where I lived seven years. But none of them are near as good as the ones we have right here.

The policemen of New York City are gallant. And they always work with all their might to please everybody, but just the same. Whenever anything happens they are sure to get the blame. The people of New York I think are unfair and impatient. They never take into consideration the brave and hard work that the policemen do. The people who appreciate them are few.

ANNA H. MULLER.

Hello! The New York Telephone Company, Mr. John L. Swayze speaking. "It is the company's wish to meet the people of this State fairly." Thank you, Mr. Swayze. Meet us anywhere you say.

TOO SMALL.

Say, Boss! You of the flinty heart!
A bit of info, pray impart
To one who oft your scorn endures:
Say! How big is that zinc of yours?

A. P. W.

"He finds himself wandering, like the hero of 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' amid pitfalls and gins. . . ."

Garrett P. Serviss in the American.
Remoulding Bunyan nearer to the Hearst desire.

It is rumored on Broadway that Stuffy, the well-known stuffy, has changed his name to Glenmore Jitney Davis.

WITH APOLOGIES TO H. W. L. AND F. P. A.
I shot some verses at the Tower;
Did criticism on me shower?
No, not a single reader panned them—
None saw them but the Boss, who canned them.

I wrote again; to land, you think?
Ah yes, I landed—in the zinc.
(A by-law of the Union bans a Success before the final stanza.)

I then refilled my fountain pen;
Like Robert Bruce, I tried again.
I stuck it out like Patient Gris,
And sent another—here it is!

HANK.

Suggestions for things to be investigated by this Bastion of Banality on the Grand Tour are highly welcome. We'll do anything but sight-see.

Speaking of bastions, Tennyson seemed to have known about our Grand Tour. What said he in "In Memoriam"?

"And topples round the dreary west
A looming bastion, fringed with fire."

F. P. A.



"Well, Bill, we're reasonable!"

THE PEOPLE'S COLUMN

An Open Forum for Public Debate.

OPEN MARKETS PERMANENT

Moderate Rentals Now Made Possible.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Statements regarding the action of the Sinking Fund Commission yesterday in connection with the open markets have created a false impression with the public. The markets were made permanent by the action of the commission. It will now be possible for the city to collect moderate rentals from the dealers. This has been my plan from the outset, as announced last August. It is only proper for me to say, however, that the markets were not abolished, but are now open markets. In the first place, because they are not worth high rentals, and, in the second place, because a heavy tax upon the dealers would immediately come out of the pockets of the consumers and defeat the purpose for which these markets were inaugurated—namely, to reduce the high cost of living.

In view of legal technicalities, the Fort Lee ferry market is in some danger. I am working vigorously upon plans to continue the advantage of this market in a nearby location. The bridge markets will continue so long as the public patronizes them. They have weathered the winter wonderfully well; they have saved the people tremendously during the hard times, and the women of New York have gladly welcomed the opportunity to go to market.

MARCUS M. MARKS,
President Borough of Manhattan,
New York, Feb. 15, 1915.

"TWENTY MILLION GERMANS"

Facts of the Census Contrasted with Fancies of Orators and Pamphleteers.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: There seems to be a general belief of a much larger number of Germans in the United States than is warranted by the facts. In a mixed gathering at Terrace Garden, New York City, as reported in The Tribune on December 18 last, one of the speakers, an alien labor agitator from Dublin, Ireland, stated that there were "twenty million Germans and thirteen million Irishmen in this country," and according to this agitator there were enough of them to do things, and if they would hang together they could "make the United States and the news-papers here do as they liked." And German Ridder is reported to have asserted in his German newspaper that he "spoke for the six millions or more of German-Americans in the United States," and even so careful a writer as Irvin S. Cobb, in one of his war essays, says: "It is stated that there are between seven million and ten million persons of German birth in this country at present—say there are seven millions." etc.

These statements are not in accordance with the facts. In the last census of the United States, for 1910, the total number of people in this country was 91,972,266, exclusive of outlying possessions, such as the Philippines and Hawaiian Islands, and of this number 78,466,380 persons were American born and 13,515,886 were foreign born; a total of 14.7 per cent only of all persons of foreign birth.

Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) and 1,209,717 born in Canada. These numbers include men, women and children, and are less than a total of 24 per cent of Germans and less than 15 per cent of Irish. As the proportion of our German population relative to the total population has been growing less and less during the last ten years, the actual percentages at the present date (five years since the last census was taken) are considerably less than those given above.

In New York City, according to the United States census of 1910, in a total population of 4,766,983, there were 278,137 German persons, which means about one-fifth, or a total of 56,627 German male adults of voting age. It may be a surprise to most people to learn that there are more Russians in New York City by nearly 2 to 1 than there are Germans, for there were 481,193 Russians in 1910, against 278,137 Germans; and still New York has a greater proportion of Germans relative to the total population than any other city in the United States except St. Louis. Yet the total German population in greater New York (278,137, including women and children) makes a small number compared with the total foreign born population in the city, of Russians, Italians, Canadians, Irish and other nationalities, and an altogether much smaller proportion compared with the total population in greater New York of about five millions, over three millions of whom are American born.

Deducting four-fifths for women and children (the usual allowance) and we have of Germans about 600,000 of adult or voting age in the whole United States, or less than one-half of 1 per cent of the total population. It seems to me that the opinions of this half of 1 per cent as to the European war receive much more importance than their numbers warrant. The opinions and sympathies of the 79,000,000 of natives and the 11,000,000 of other foreigners (not Germans) who have settled among us are entitled first to our respect, not to the 14.7 per cent of Germans.

ONE OF THE NATIVES.

New York, Feb. 12, 1915.

"WATCHFUL WAITING," PERHAPS

Or Hyper-Super-Extra Neutrality.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: As a subscriber to your daily and a great admirer of the methods carried out in the management of it, may I be permitted to send you the following questions? This government assumes a high moral ground in its dealings with all other peoples, and this is especially the case, I believe, with the existing (Democratic) administration which Mr. Wilson represents. If I am right in this statement, then I must confess to a lack of comprehension how the United States can remain silent while witnessing the grossest violations by Germany of the law of nations. Such an attempt, even on the part of the writer, to remain silent when (Germany excepted) the whole world is standing aghast at the shameful and frequent outrages of this war?

137 German boats; and still New York has a greater proportion of Germans relative to the total population than any other city in the United States except St. Louis. Yet the total German population in greater New York (278,137, including women and children) makes a small number compared with the total foreign born population in the city, of Russians, Italians, Canadians, Irish and other nationalities, and an altogether much smaller proportion compared with the total population in greater New York of about five millions, over three millions of whom are American born.

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ONE OF THE NATIVES.

New York, Feb. 12, 1915.

How Many in Buckram?

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Of course Mr. Ridder knew the kind of answer he would get, but he wanted the advertising for himself and the group think or pretend they are acting for. Why didn't he include all the descendants of Austrians and Turks as well? The nerve of some people! New York, Feb. 13, 1915. A. B.

FULL CREW LAWS UNWISE

Citizens Urged to Ask Legislators for Repeal.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: The Pennsylvania Railroad Company declares that this law causes a waste of \$1,000,000 annually in the employment of unnecessary men on the Pennsylvania system alone. This is an injustice to the stockholders and even to the public. What is virtually the Pennsylvania Railroad Company? Is it a band of hard-hearted money grasping, humanity crushing capitalists? No; its stockholders number almost 100,000 persons, and 45,000 of these are women, many of them dependent for their support upon the dividends of the company.

It is well known that full crew laws are pushed by the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, but such effort is as unjust as would be that of store clerks if they should demand a law that every grocer and butcher must employ at least three helpers. When a railroad spends money unnecessarily it impairs either its equipment for public service or its dividends for its stockholders. The Tribune and other papers are arrayed on the side of justice and good sense, and we would urge the voters of New Jersey to write to their representatives in the Senate and Assembly requesting the repeal of the full crew law. And we trust that our legislators will prove themselves men of sterling worth, not intimidated by any unreasonable cry because it has votes behind it. JOHN K. JONES.
Metuchen, N. J., Feb. 15, 1915.

Mortality of Sophistries.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: One of your correspondents objects to your giving so much space to the woman suffrage question. It gets a little tiresome, she says. So did the Dreyfus case in France and the Home Rule bills in England. But that's the way with wrongs. They simply insist on taking up space till they're righted. This same correspondent speaks of Alice Duer Miller's "brilliant sophistries." Doesn't she mean "brilliant exposure of sophistries"? The losses suffered by the sophistry army in killed, wounded and missing have been enormous since Alice Duer Miller resumed her Tribune column.

CLARENCE DAY, JR.,
New York, Feb. 14, 1915.

Another Lind Mission

Watchful Waiting Not Appreciated in Europe.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Human intelligence is shocked at the report from Washington saying that another "personal representative" of President Wilson has been sent abroad to report "confidentially" as the outlook for peace in Europe. If we are to base our hopes for the future on the experience of the past, it is to be assumed that Colonel House will accomplish as much in Europe as John Lind did in Mexico, namely, make our country ridiculous in the eyes of the diplomatic world.

By what right or token may we presume to offer mediation to the European belligerents? The jelly-back administration did not protest at the breach of international law or usage as expressed in the London and Hague conventions, to which we were parties. Further, we are responsible for the murder of Germans and Englishmen and loss of their property in Mexico, because we alone have supported the Mexican revolution, so that the border Democrats might sell munitions of war in exchange for stolen cattle, horses and bullion. The Benton murder would not have been possible if Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan had not taken the bandit Villa and the inflated, incompetent Carranza under their personal and political tutelage, and the whole of Europe knows these facts through its diplomatic agents.

Also, Europe realizes that the American people are not responsible for the present distorted system of socialism in government. It knows that Mr. Wilson, with his amateurish Cabinet, is a minority President, and that all he will be able to do at the next election will be to run against the man who will undoubtedly be President. Europe does not want our intervention in the interest of peace, because we are in no position to mediate, owing to our past that we have not acted in support of the London and Hague conventions, and we are simply making ourselves ridiculous.

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CLARENCE DAY, JR.,
New York, Feb. 14, 1915.

Thanks to Mr. Ridder.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Surely we Tribune readers and the thoroughbred Americans we Mr. Herman Ridder a vote of thanks for drawing out Mr. Ogden M. Reid's concealed but full and clear statement of the true meaning underlying those smooth seeming "planks" adopted by the Neutrality (?) League.

Since questions are in order, may I ask what truth there is in the oft-repeated assertion of these anti-American Germans that there are 25,000,000 of them in the United States? An answer would be greatly appreciated, as I am asking not for myself alone, but for a number of others who doubt the statement, but have no means of proving the contrary.

Lakewood, N. J., Feb. 13, 1915.
(The United States census of 1910 showed that there were then only 2,501,333 German born persons in the United States.)